# PHILANOR NEWS

# Bammas

VOLUME 1

ISSUE 5



# A Word From Our President

"The harvest fly was two days late." Thus begins the August 3, 1805 entry in the Diary of Noah Blake-an Early American Boy, reproduced as a book by American artist and historian Eric Sloan. In the tradition of nineteenth century America the cicada was supposed to begin singing on Lammas day. Like many other Pagan traditions the holiday continued to be celebrated, under a thin veneer of Christianity until quite recently. These "living traditions", such as Maypole, Yule trees, Easter eggs and Lammas bread bakes have always held a great deal of fascination for me as our most "genuine" practices passed down from our Pagan past.

In researching the history of Lammas celebration I learned a number of interesting things. The tradition of baking bread goes back to the days of ancient Rome where August first was the feast of Ceres, the grain mother, and a ritual breadbake re-enacted the sacrifice and resurrection of her divine son, the grain king. When Rome was Christianized the ritual was absorbed by the new religion whose adherents carried it to the Celtic lands of northern and western Europe where it was performed in conjunction with the fire festival of Lughnasad--also a feast of first harvest. Over the course of time it took on the Saxon name "Hlaf-mas"-the loaf mass eventually becoming "Lammas." As an interesting side note the Saxon words "Hlad-di" meaning "loafgiver" are the source of the modern English word "lady."

In Early America likewise it was the festival of

first fruits. Different families would host the event in different years, inviting their neighbors to partake of the food and merriment. Traditionally each family gave their longest and widest single plank (cut from their own tree) to be used as the "Lammas board" from which the food was to be served. Games were organized for the children as well as the adults and prayer of thanksgiving were offered before the meal.

One of the most popular games of this holiday was a walk thru maze or "Bower", wherein participants physically walked thru a maze mowed into the turf or grain field. Depending on the size, some such mazes could be take a hour or more to complete. Often prizes would be given to all who negotiated its twisting & turning passage finally arriving at the center. It seems to me that there must have been some earlier religious significance to the type of "game" and its association with the feast of first harvest, but frankly I have yet to find the connection. If any of you readers have information please let me know.

This year PhilaNOR will be presenting our own Lammas bread bake at Mayfire farm where it will be the sixth such event. Be sure to be there to take part in this ancient "living tradition" as we gather to bake bread in our 19th century brick oven. We hope to see you there. Blessed be!

David Mayfire

#### Song Of Proserpine

Sacred Goddess, Mother Earth,
Thou from whose immortal bosom
Gods, and men, and beasts have birth,
Leaf and blade, and bud and blossom,
Breathe thine influence most divine
On thine own child, Proserpine.

If with mists of evening dew
Thou dost nourish these young flowers
Till they grow, in scent and hue,
Fairest children of the Hours,
Brother thine own influence most divine
On thine own child, Proserpine.

Percy Bysshe Shelley



# From The Editor's Desk

Dear PhilaNOR,

There are many times in a person's life when one feels frustration and anger at government run institutions, i.e. the IRS, the FBI....however, lately my ire has been provoked by the US Postal Service. I keep receiving complaints of newsletters being delivered in shreds. I am just as frustrated by this as the recipients of these few pieces of paper (if they make it THAT far - I've heard some folk may receive one page of the newsletter!) I am doing several things to try allay this: first, by the time you read this, I will have spoken to the Post Office about this sorry state of affairs; secondly, due to a number of problems, the newsletters will no longer be mailed from Philadelphia; and thirdly, the newsletter is now sealed and collated differently to avoid the use of staples. (Staples seem to get stuck in the Postal machinery, thereby ripping the paper up.) Hopefully, these efforts will change the condition your newsletter arrives in! If you have missed a newsletter due to this problem, do not hesitate to contact me at 463-3484. Also, I will now be bringing current and back copies of the newsletter to every PhilaNOR meeting and event.

As you can see, we've changed our format a bitthis issue, as mentioned before, to eliminate the need for so many staples, and also to accommodate the contributions we've been receiving. Hope you like the new format, and keep those cards and letters coming!

Special thanks to Ivo Dominguez, Jr., for his

poem (which I know many of us can relate to), and chakra visualization. Thanks to all who sent poems and articles- and thanks Kat for proofreading and collating, and thanks to Bill Farrell for his wonderful computer system-Yipee!

Bill & I had a great time at this year's Beltane, and as the celebration was still going on after we left, I suspect those who attended did as well. It was a lovely evening, sharing bottles of May Wine, listening to the drummers gathered around the fire. Thanks so much to Siobhra who contributed the use of her farm so graciously. Thanks to all who brought delicious food (and especially to Bonnie not only for her delicious chicken, but also for cleaning up what looked like tables picked clean by vultures.) Thanks to David for what became a beautifully woven May pole, and to Siobhra, for supplying us with Beltane games. Thanks to Bernard and his friend (sorry, I didn't catch your name) for the gift of music.

Lammas approaches soon- hope to see all you PhilaNOR members and loved one's at David & Bonnie's for Bread Bake.

Bright Blessings and Love,

Thelena





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## EVENTS LISTING

7/22 Stop smoking workshop, Sophrosyne, Clayton, St Wellness Center, Wilmington, DE (302) 655-7841

7/22 Tarot II 7:30, \$25.00 Earth Spirit Integration Center, (215) 483-4167

7/25 Ayurvedic Medicine, Sophrosyne, Wilm. DE (302) 655-7841

7/29 Beginning Witchcraft II, 7:30, \$25.00, Earth Spirit Integration Center 483-4167

7/29 Quit Smoking, Sophrosyne, Wilm. DE (302)-655-7841

8/2 PhilaNOR Lammas Bread Bake, Mayfire Farms, (215) 845-2834

8/4 Healing your wounded child 7-9:00 pm, Sophrosyne \$35 (302) 655-

8/5 Drumming Circle, Hand of Aries 923-5264

8/5 Child birth through hypnosis, \$30 7-9:00 pm Sophrosyne, Wilm, DE (302)-655-7841

8/5 Intro to Ritual Design, Earth Spirit Integration Center 483-4167

8/8 A healing Retreat, Sophrosyne, Wilm DE 9am-4 pm \$30 (302) 655-7841

8/11 Past Life Regression Through Hypnosis, Sophrosyne 7:00pm \$25, (302) 655-7841

8/12 Shammanism 101: Totems, 7:30, \$25, Earth Spirit Integration Center, 483-4167

8/13 Full Moon Ritual, Hand of Aries, 923-5264

8/15-8/16 Bus trip to Salem, Mass for Heritage Day Parade \$45-Hand of Aries 923-5264

8/19 Candle Magic 7:30, \$25, Earth Spirit Integration Center 483-4167

8/20 Quit Smoking, Sophrosyne, (302)-655-7841

8/26 Magickal Uses of Oils & Herbs-Spirit Integration Center, 483-4167

9/2 Drumming, Hand of Aries 923-5264

9/11 Full Moon Ritual, Hand of Aries 923-5264

9/16 The Ethics of Magical Conduct, Hand of Aries, 923-5264

9/26 PhilaNOR meeting at Unitarian Church, 22nd and Chestnut. Board meeting at 6pm, general meeting at 7:30pm.\*

10/23 PhilaNOR Samhain Celebration-more info to follow ... \*

\* Indicates a PhilaNOR event

\* Pleas take note: Samhain's date has been changed to October 23. It will be at the Unitarian Church at 2125 Chestnut, See the next PhilaNOR News for more info.



#### A Root Chakra Visualization

Most exercises for working with chakras, the equivalent of organs in our subtle energy bodies, are designed primarily to encourage the movement of energy. This root chakra visualization is meant to stir the fires of the imagination, and encourage grounding within your personal vision. I invite you to examine the visualization. If you like it, have a friend read it to you or make a tape.

Place your body in a comfortable position and close your eyes. Breathe deeply and slowly. If you have any pressing concerns or worries set them aside. Tell your troubles that you will return to them later but for now you wish to lay your burden down. Let tension seep away from your body. \*\*\*\* (\*\* means pause)

Imagine that you are becoming a tree in the midst of a forest. Your feet are sprouting roots that are delving into the ground. Your roots are slipping through the soil, embracing the ever larger stones that they find as they dig deeper. Your roots intertwine with the roots of the other plants and trees the surround you. Your roots and the roots of all trees that you sense around you are digging downwards towards the Earth's core. the Earth's core is a fiery ball of molten rock and your roots reach towards it. \*\*\*\*\*

Now imagine that your arms and hands are boughs and branches reaching upwards to the sky. Feel the breezes move through the leaves that are your fingers. As you reach upwards towards the blazing ball of the sun, feel the light touch of the leaves and the branches of other trees reaching skywards with you. Feel the warmth of the sun upon your leaves, your branches, and your boughs. \*\*\*\*

Sense the sun above you and the fire of the Earths's core below. Find the center of your consciousness, the point that is the seat of your awareness. Let your consciousness float free up and down in your trunk. Let your consciousness float until it finds a place of stillness and balance between the sun above and fire below. You are grounded and you are centered. \*\*\*\*

You are the Tree of your Lives.

At the bases of the tree lies a powerful serpent, its coils moving in a slow spiral. What does the serpent look like. \*\*\*\* Held carefully in its moving coils is a red egg. From glance to glance the egg changes as it moves in the coils, sometimes brilliant

like a ruby other times a dull earthy red.

Look now into the serpent's eyes and ask it if it has anything to say to you. Listen.

\*\*\*\*Accept the silence or statement and dwell on it \*\*\*\*\*

The serpent asks you to enter the red egg. Your center of conscience leaves the tree and moves into the center of the red egg. Within the egg you see every possible shade of red, swirling about you. You see crimson, scarlet, tulip red, cherry red, rose, fire ember red, and many other shades you cannot name. \*\*\*\* You look up at the tree and see that it has become winter. The tree is bare. Snow is heavy upon the bough and icicles weigh down the branches. The serpent lies in a still circle about the roots. Within the egg you feel warm and safe at the same time that you are aware of the cold wind that blows outside. \*\*\* The snow and ice begin to melt. Soon all traces of winter are gone and the buds begin to swell. Flowers blink open, covering the tree. The flowers' fragrance is faint but distinct. \*\*\* The flowers fade and fall as leaves unfurl and turn from light green of spring to the deep green of summer. New branches grow and twigs spread out to catch the intense warmth of the sun. Some of the flowers have set and have swollen. \*\*\* The leaves have caught with the fire of autumn and are ablaze upon the branches. The wind that whistles outside the crystal egg has chilled. You notice a particular crimson fruit that hangs heavy upon the tree. It is egg shaped and translucent. The fruit is ripe. It falls and is caught in the coils of the serpent. \*\*\*

The crystal egg that you are inside of begins to crack and crumble. The outer shell vanishes and you are afloat in a red mist. the mist grows darker and you sense that you are in motion. \*\*\*\*

The motion stops. The mist clears, and you find you are now the center of the fruit that is now the new egg. The serpent turns its head towards the egg and bids that you depart. You leave the egg and become the tree once again. Your roots dig towards the fire of the Earth and you branches reach towards the Sun above. \*\*\*\*

When you are ready slowly open your eyes, and ease back into a fuller awareness of your body. Wiggle your toes and fingers before standing up. Take time to jot down some of your impressions and imagery before they fade.

Suo Dominguez, Fr.

# BloodLine---Thoughts

A long, long time ago womon were respected. Womon were deified. At times womon were even feared.

We Bleed. We bring life.

Womon, during those times, ran the home, and the government. Womon created Agriculture. Womon created culture.

When we bleed we are closer to the cosmos (The veils between the worlds are thinner at that time. So it is beleived.) When womon of yesteryears bled, they retreated, from the tribe to dream...to seek visions...to ask questions of the spirits. When the bleeding was over, the womon would bring back their answers to the tribe.

So why are our periods now considered "the curse" when at one time it was our glory? Why do womon nowdays go thorough so much pain when they bled? The answer is long and involved, because the changes in attitude took many years of coercion, manipulation, murder, toruture, propaganda. To put it as concisely as possible, "they" do not want us to know about the power we have within...because once we tap into that power, "they" will lose control over us.

I believe womon should take time out to dream and seek vision when they bleed. To meditate. To keep journals. To learn and reclaim their rightful power--to really let loose with the mystery of menstruation.

## Morgan LeFay

#### ...Reflections

The long boat, dark blue, slips through the gray waters and disappears into the fog. High up in the clouds we see glimpses of the glass mountains, reflections, glimmers of silver, Light sparkles as the hidden moonlight dances across the mirrors. A wind stirs the fog. I smell apples in the air. The long dark boat moves through the water. The black robed sisters sit in the boat, their silent paddles dip into gray, silver water. Morgan stands in the middle of the boat. The Creative One returns. Morgan returns. Sisters return for me. Slip through the fog in your long dark boat and take me home. Home. Home. Morgan weave my

song. Weave my song for me as the brave ones seek to be changed. Let us dance, dance, among the glass mountains, in the mirrors, dear, and eat of the apples. Avalon apples. Avalon. Morgan teach me. Morgan hear me. Let us walk through the fog. Let us disappear in Mist and talk and play, talk and play. Fair womon priestess wise join hands with me, let us dance with your sisters eight, let us dance with your sisters eight, into fireings of Scotland, moorland bonfires and return home across the sea through the Mist. Morgan. Morgan LeFay. I hear. I hear. Avalon calls. Take me home.

Patricia Elbelwyn Howell

## Unnatural Acts & Allergies

Fresh ,unfiltered apple cider.

The familiar love-itch of favorite wool sweaters.

And, alas, ragweed and a runny nose.

Oh runny nose, mark of autumnal shame, why do you mark me?

I am a child of the woods and glades.

I am a child of the spiraling seasons.

I am a child of antihistamines and decongestants.

Allergies, antihistamines, unnatural?

Are runny noses a sign: of Nature's wrath of displaced emotions? of some tain in humanity?

No, those are quick gults and easy answers for helpless responsibility-The New Age Psychopomp so often psychobabble.

I am still a child of the woods and glades, but most of the woods are gone.

Proud trees are grudged their lives but humble ragweed with no thoughts of glory, and opportunistic goldenrod flourishes in the margins,

in the vacant lots, in medians, and in sidewalk cracks.

My body knows this.

Once trees held the soil in deep rooted embrace.

Herbs nurtured your soils,
unready for the passions of the climax forest.

By our hand the embrace is broken.

Despairing soil grieves to the sea.

The land cries in the erosive tears. The herbs work to comfort the land,
filling the golden hope of pollen.

No mark of shame, but rather a reassurance.

My body remembers the old balance.

My nose remembers purity it has never breathed.

I am a child of the woods and glades.

I am a child of the spiraling seasons.

When the World is well again, perhaps both breath and wind will meet as friends.

Suo Dominnguez, gr.

## Homer's Hymn to the earth: Mother of all

O universal Mother, who dost keep
From everlasting thy foundations deep,
Eldest of things, Great Earth, I sing of thee!
All shapes that have their dwellings in the sea,
All things that fly, or on the ground divine
Live, move, and there are nourished-these are
thine;

These from thy wealth thou dost sustain; from thee

Fair babes are born, and fruits on every tree Hang ripe and large, revered Divinity!

The life of mortal men beneath thy sway

Is held; thy power both gives and takes away!
Happy are they whom thy mild favors nourish;
All things unstinted round them grow and flourish.

For them, endures the life-sustaining field
Its load of harvest, and their cattle yield
Large increase, and their house with wealth is
filled.

Such honored dwell in cities fair and free,
The homes of lovely women, prosperously;
Their sons exult in youth's new budding gladness,
And their fresh daughters free from care or
sadness,

With bloom-unwoven dance and happy song,
On the soft flowers the meadow-grass among,
Leap round them sporting--such delights by thee
Are given, rich Power, revered Divinity.

Mother of gods, thou Wife of starry Heaven,
Farewell! be thou propitious, and be given
A happy life of this brief melody,
Nor thou nor other songs shall unremembered be.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

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Networking tool of Children of the Earth Mother, a Neo-Pagan newsletter of articles, art, poetry and more. Forum for the Pagan Parent Network. 8 issues \$12/Sample \$1.75 POB 1652, Bethany, OK 73008

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Patricia Ethelwyn Howell 54 Maple Drive Newark, De 19713

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Samhain- Oct 1, 1992 Yule- Dec 1, 1992 Brigit- Jan 10, 1993 Beltane- April 1, 1993 Lammas- July 1, 1993

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Opening Ritual: 1:00 P.M.

Please join us for our 6th Lammas Ritual bread bake. Bake bread in our 150 year old brick oven in celebration of first harvest, as we honor the grain mother and celebrate the sacrifice and resurrection of her divine son.

Please phone for directions & details
(215) 845-2834

Your hosts: David & Bonnie Donohue
Box 951 R.D.#3
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Please Call to let us know you're coming!

Bakers! Register early to reserve your space - oven accommodates about 16 loaves

Please bring a potluck covered dish to share (not a "starch" as there will be lots of bread)

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no pets.

no niegal substances.

alcohol must be kept under personal

control.

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follow Rt. 422W into pottstown.

Take Rt. 100n toward allentown.

Go approx. 10 miles to mantic road (after approx.

5 miles Rt. 100n will become a two lane road.

Thavel another approx. 4 miles and you will pass washington township elementary school on right).

Turn right onto mantic road (if you miss this turn you will travel 0.5 miles into bally, penna.).

Go to oth house on left with cast iron fence.

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Philanor Presents: Lammas 1992

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